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Human resources management

Overview of human resources management reform: towards a global, dynamic and adaptable workforce for the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 67/255, 68/252 and 68/265. The report presents an overview of human resources management in the Organization, specifically addressing progress in the implementation of the human resources management reforms approved by the General Assembly since its sixty-third session in 2009. The report contains information on the learning and career development strategy, and on efforts to improve gender and geographic representation, including the representation of developing countries, and to improve staff health and well-being.

The report has four addenda: an update on the preparatory work for implementation of the mobility and career development framework (A/69/190/Add.1); a proposal for strengthening the performance management system (A/69/190/Add.2); a progress report on and proposed next steps for the young professionals programme (A/69/190.Add.3); and a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges (A/69/190/Add.4).

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 67/255, 68/252 and 68/265. The report provides updated information on the implementation of ongoing human resources management reforms in the Organization, which have been under way since the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. It contains information on the learning and career development strategy, and an update on efforts to improve gender representation, the representation of developing countries and staff health and well-being. Four addenda to the report contain: an update on the preparatory work for implementation of the mobility and career development framework (A/69/190/Add.1); a proposal for strengthening the performance management system (A/69/190/Add.2); a progress report and proposed next steps for the young professionals programme (A/69/190/Add.3); and a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges (A/69/190/Add.4).

2. The status of implementation of requests made by the General Assembly in its resolutions 63/250, 67/255, 68/252 and 68/265 and of requests and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions endorsed by the Assembly is set out in the annex to the report.

II. Summary of progress made with regard to human resources reform initiatives and talent management

3. The Organization's greatest resource is its workforce. Since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 63/250, the Organization has undertaken a variety of human resources management reforms to develop a United Nations that is more responsive and flexible, supports a culture of empowerment and performance; allows equal access to career opportunities, irrespective of programmes and sources of funding; and provides staff with the chance to learn and grow so that they can reach their greatest potential. With these conditions in place, the Secretariat can best attract a global, adaptable and dynamic talent pool and ensure that the Organization can function in an integrated and interoperable fashion. Table 1 provides a summary of progress made as of August 2014 and the next steps to be taken by the Organization in continuing to implement the human resources reforms.

Table 1
Summary of progress made in implementation of human resources reforms

Area	*Activities/milestones*	*Next steps*
Contractual reform	One-time review of permanent appointments conducted: of 5,908 cases, 4,094 were deemed eligible for conversion to permanent appointments as of July 2014	
	Continuing appointments system established, including development of supporting information technology tool and calculation of post envelopes	Issuance of continuing appointments for those staff deemed eligible
	As of July 2014, a review of continuing appointments is under way	

Area	*Activities milestones*	*Next steps*
Workforce planning	Launched HR Insight tool which provides staffing information, including on retirements, for Member States	Leverage of Inspira, Umoja and mobility projects to continue to improve ability to plan the Organization's workforce
	Completed a pilot workforce planning project with the Medical Services Division	
	Civilian staff reviews mandated for all missions to ensure staffing is aligned with mandate. Six completed as of June 2014	• Finalization of civilian staff reviews for remaining missions and compile best practices, lessons learned and trends
Staff selection and recruitment	Implemented Inspira e-staffing platform on 22 April 2010. Inspira, which replaced Galaxy, is a more flexible and feature-rich platform with enhanced screening and reporting capabilities. Inspira has now been deployed to the field	
	New staff selection system implemented on 22 April 2010 with streamlined eligibility criteria, improved evaluation methodology and greater emphasis on roster selection	
	Careers website established, providing information on employment in the United Nations, including how to apply, interviews, examinations, conditions of service, etc.	
	Young professionals programme implemented annually, with first examinations carried out in December 2011, and successful candidates onboarded as of July 2012	
	Outreach strengthened with establishment of Outreach Unit	
	Enlargement of field rosters by 1,500 additional candidates during 2013-2014	
Performance management	Mandatory performance management training introduced in 2011	Implementation of proposed changes outlined in A/69/190/Add.2
	E-performance tool in Inspira completed and deployed throughout the Organization in April 2012	
	Consultations, including on best practice, to reform and strengthen performance management in the Organization	

Area	*Activities/milestones*	*Next steps*
	Development of a proposal to strengthen performance management, to be reviewed by the General Assembly in 2014	
Learning and career development	Learning management system piloted in early 2012 Development of new learning and career support strategy in 2014	Continue deployment of learning management system to include e-learning content of mandatory courses, substantive content courses, language courses and language exams, etc. Continue reviewing and revising learning and development programmes in line with the key elements of the new learning and career support strategy
Mobility	Proposal for comprehensive mobility and career development framework approved by the General Assembly	Preparation commenced for the implementation of comprehensive mobility framework, beginning in 2016
Work/life issues	Flexible working arrangements pilot carried out during the period November 2011 to December 2014. Lessons learned used to develop a revised policy Communications campaign on flexible working arrangements carried out	Finalize and implement revised flexible working arrangements policy

III. Specific initiatives

A. Implementation of human resources management reforms

Background and imperatives

4. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/255, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at the main part of its sixty-ninth session a progress report on the implementation of ongoing human resources management reforms, including those approved in its resolutions 63/250, 65/247 and 67/255, with a particular focus on whether those reforms were yielding the expected benefits and other efficiencies and concrete improvements. The progress made and experience gained so far in the implementation of the contractual arrangements, the harmonization of conditions of service in the field and the benefits realized are described below.

1. Contractual arrangements

5. As set out in the report of the Secretary-General on investing in people (A/61/255), one of the major objectives of human resources management reform was to recognize the Organization's need for a truly integrated, field-oriented and global workforce. A major obstacle to achieving that objective was the wide range of

contractual arrangements with different conditions of service. At that time, there were three different series of the Staff Rules (100, 200 and 300 series), with nine different contract types. While in general the 100 and 200 series of the Staff Rules provided for similar conditions of service, the 300-series appointment of limited duration used in field operations provided a much more limited compensation package.

6. Consistent with the contractual framework adopted by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) (A/60/30, annex IV), the Secretary-General proposed simplified and streamlined contractual arrangements (see A/63/298) which would better serve operational requirements and ensure transparency, fairness and consistency in the treatment of staff. The new contractual arrangements provided for three types of appointments under a single series of Staff Rules:

(a) A temporary appointment for less than one year, or renewed for one additional year to meet surge needs in the field and needs of special projects;

(b) A fixed-term appointment, which could be renewed for any period up to five years at a time;

(c) A continuing appointment, which would be open-ended.

7. The General Assembly, in its resolution 63/250, stressed the need for the rationalization of the United Nations system of contractual arrangements, which lacked transparency and was complex to administer, and approved the new contractual arrangements which would comprise three types of appointments (temporary, fixed-term and continuing), under one set of Staff Rules, effective 1 July 2009.

Temporary appointments

8. The introduction of the temporary appointment has provided flexibility for the Organization to respond to evolving organizational needs without long-term obligations. The 364-day limitation on the use of the temporary appointments for work that is not related to field operations or special projects with finite periods is, however, sometimes too short to meet certain temporary needs. Some departments/offices would prefer to have flexibility to extend the temporary appointment beyond 364 days for temporary needs not related to the field or for special projects for a finite period, for example, in cases in which a staff member is hired on a temporary appointment to replace another staff member on special leave without pay that is extended for a period of two years. In addition, in some instances, offices or commissions have been assigned short mandates of less than one year which were subsequently extended for successive periods of three to six months at a time. Staff members recruited on temporary appointments for service with such entities eventually reach the maximum period of 729 days on a temporary appointment. The uncertainties of mandate extensions and funding, however, do not allow for the recruitment of staff on fixed-term appointments, as the initial fixed-term appointment must be for a period of at least one year or more. Although the rigidity of the temporary appointment does not always respond to such uncertain operational realities, ad hoc solutions have been found in such instances to ensure programme continuity.

Fixed-term appointments

9. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/250, the new Staff Rules were promulgated provisionally, effective 1 July 2009. A review of staff

holding 300-series appointments of limited duration in the field was conducted, resulting in 3,620 international staff in peacekeeping operations and special political missions being reappointed under the new fixed-term arrangements, effective 1 July 2009. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/250, staff members on former 300-series appointments were given mission-specific fixed-term appointments until such time as they had gone through a competitive process that was subject to the review of a central review body. With the promulgation of administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/3 on the staff selection system, international staff members in peacekeeping operations and special political missions were integrated into the Secretariat's staff selection system, ensuring that common standards would be applied to the recruitment of all staff at headquarters and in the field.

10. Staff members previously serving under the 200-series of Staff Rules were also reappointed on fixed-term appointments under the new Staff Rules. The fixed-term appointments of staff under the former 200 series of the Staff Rules were limited to service at the department or office and the level at which he or she was serving, until such time as they had gone through a competitive process that was subject to the review of a central review body.

11. A new administrative instruction on the administration of fixed-term appointments (ST/AI/2013/1 and Corr.1) was issued on 22 April 2013. Promulgated in the instruction is a standardized approach throughout the Secretariat to the granting and renewal of fixed-term appointments and the criteria for the renewal of fixed-term appointments for periods of up to five years at a time.

2. Continuing appointment review

12. Following the preparation phase, which included the promulgation of the policy and procedures for a continuing appointment and the application of enhancements to Inspira to facilitate the review process, the first review for consideration for conversion to a continuing appointment as at 1 July 2012 was launched on 8 July 2013.

13. The initial post envelope for the 2012 review for the Professional and higher categories and the Field Service category was 6,869 and for the General Service and related categories, 4,451. After deducting the number of existing staff with continuing and permanent appointments in each of the post envelopes, the total maximum number of continuing appointments that could be granted for the 2012 review was 3,342 for the Professional and higher categories and the Field Service category and 558 for the General Service and related categories.

14. For the 2012 review, a total of 4,972 staff members were potentially eligible. Of those, 2,432 staff members in the Professional and higher categories and in the Field Service category, and 764 staff in the General Service and related categories, met the eligibility criteria. As the number of eligible staff in the Professional and higher categories and Field Service category was less than the available number of appointments in the post envelope, there was no requirement to conduct a review of points. Given that more staff were found eligible than the number of available appointments under the post envelope for the General Service and related categories, a points allocation review will be conducted.

15. Approximately 60 per cent (or 1,479) of the staff in the Professional and higher categories and Field Service category found eligible for consideration for conversion

to a continuing appointment were serving in field missions. Despite the fact that staff members in field missions represent the majority of staff found eligible, a number of staff, particularly but not exclusively in the field, were found to be ineligible because they did not have the four performance appraisal reports, required in accordance with paragraph 53 (d) of and the annex to General Assembly resolution 65/247. While the normal performance appraisal cycle is for one year, prior to the contractual reforms, staff members with appointments of less than one year often had special performance reports covering periods of less than one year. In other instances, particularly for staff in the field, the frequent movement of staff and/or supervisors between jobs or duty stations during the reporting cycle resulted in performance reports being given for periods of less than one year. To address the issue of the duration of the performance appraisal report, the Secretary-General proposes, as a transitional measure pursuant to paragraph 53 (d) of and the annex to General Assembly resolution 65/247, to allow staff members who have had a performance rating of at least "Meets expectations" or its equivalent in all performance reports, including those of a duration of less than one year, covering the preceding four years to be eligible for consideration for conversion to a continuing appointment. No points, however, would be allocated for any performance appraisal report covering a period of less than one year. It is proposed that this transitional measure be implemented as of the next review period, beginning 1 July 2013.

16. Some mission staff whose appointments remain limited to service with a specific mission were also found ineligible for consideration for a continuing appointment, given that the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 53 (a) (ii) of General Assembly resolution 65/247 require that staff previously appointed under the 100, 200 or 300 series of the Staff Rules and who had been appointed since 1 July 2009 on a fixed-term appointment under the new Staff Rules to have undergone a competitive process under staff rule 4.15 in order to be considered eligible for consideration for conversion to a continuing appointment. The process of regularizing the appointments of over 6,800 international staff in field missions (which involves application to a job opening, assessment, review by a central review body and a reference check) has been challenging. As of March 2014, the appointments of 62 per cent of international staff in peacekeeping operations and special political missions had been regularized through this process. A number of factors contributed to the challenges in regularizing mission staff. Some staff members have not yet applied to a generic or position-specific job opening, while other staff who did apply to a job opening either applied for a higher-level position and have not yet been selected, did not pass the assessment process, or the reference check could not be verified or completed by the time of the review. As reference checks were not previously consistently conducted for mission staff when initially appointed under the 300 and 100 series of the Staff Rules, it is necessary to conduct such reference checks during the regularization process in order to verify the required academic qualifications and previous work experience, which has also added to the timeline for completing the regularization process.

17. During the review process, some departments and offices raised concerns regarding the potential impact of granting of continuing appointments to staff serving on posts funded from voluntary contributions. The Secretary-General had proposed that staff with five years of continuous service in the Organization would be eligible for consideration for a continuing appointment, which would be granted if there were a continuing need for the services of the staff member in the same department or

elsewhere in the Organization and if the staff member had demonstrated the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity (A/63/298 para. 16). Under that proposal, staff members who held appointments limited to service in a particular office or who worked in projects or entities with finite mandates would not be excluded from consideration for continuing appointments and could be granted a continuing appointment provided there was a continuing need for their services in the Organization. The anticipated longevity of the programme, combined with the suitability of an individual for longer-term functions, would determine the continuing need for the services of the staff member concerned. Following the consideration of the Secretary-General's proposed definition of continuing need, the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/247, decided that the continuing needs of the Organization should be determined on the basis of established and temporary posts of a duration of more than five years as well as general temporary assistance in special political missions, and set the initial level of the post envelopes at 75 per cent of such posts. As eligible staff serving on positions funded from extrabudgetary sources are not excluded from the continuing appointment review on the basis of the source of funding, some departments/offices have expressed concern at the potential liability for payment of termination indemnity in respect of staff members granted a continuing appointment encumbering positions financed from voluntary contributions in the event that the funding ceased and the staff members' services were no longer required. Should such situations arise, the Organization would make efforts to laterally reassign the staff members within the department or assist the staff member in finding an alternative position in the Organization in order to reduce potential payments of termination indemnity.

18. The 2012 continuing appointment review process is currently in its final stages, with 90 per cent of cases processed, and is expected to be completed by the end of September 2014.

3. Harmonization of conditions of service in the field

19. Prior to the harmonization of conditions of service in the field in 2011, field missions were designated as either "established" (family missions) or "special" (non-family) missions. The designation of non-family missions was made for administrative and operational reasons and was not related to security at the location. For other staff of United Nations offices, agencies, funds and programmes, the designation of a duty station as "family" or "non-family" was solely based upon the designated security phase. A number of duty stations that were considered family duty stations for other staff of the Secretariat and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes were considered non-family for mission staff, leading to different treatment of mission staff. More than 90 per cent of international staff in United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions served at non-family duty stations, separated for prolonged periods of time from their families and without compensation for having to maintain a separate household. The compensation package for mission staff was between 30 and 40 per cent lower than that for field staff of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the same location. International staff vacancy rates averaged 26 per cent, with an annual turnover rate in 2007 of 29 per cent for Professional staff.

20. In an effort to improve conditions of service in the field to meet the needs of an increasingly field-based Organization, ensure equitable treatment of staff, and attract and retain high-quality personnel in the field, the Secretary-General, in his report on

harmonization of conditions of service (A/65/305/Add.1, sect. II), expressed his support for the recommendations of ICSC to harmonize the designation of mission duty stations as family or non-family on the basis of a security assessment, to introduce an additional hardship allowance for staff serving at non-family duty stations, and to establish a framework for rest and recuperation travel. The recommendations of the ICSC to harmonize conditions of service of staff in the field were approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/248, concerning the United Nations common system.

21. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 65/248, effective 1 July 2011 the designation of mission duty stations as family or non-family was harmonized with that of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, based on security considerations. As a result, effective 1 July 2011, the status of 39 duty stations in peacekeeping operations and special political missions were changed from non-family duty stations to family duty stations, increasing the proportion of mission staff assigned to family duty stations to 35 per cent, up from 10 per cent prior to July 2011. The designation of duty stations as family or non-family by the ICSC has brought equity to the treatment of United Nations common system staff at the same duty station.

22. The additional non-family hardship allowance for staff assigned to non-family duty stations was also introduced on 1 July 2011. The additional allowance has provided an incentive for staff to serve at non-family duty stations because it compensates staff for the additional costs associated with service at a non-family duty station. Turnover rates for international staff at non-family duty stations have decreased from 16 per cent for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 to 9.2 per cent for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013. This allowance has, however, posed a challenge for some family duty stations. As the determination of a duty station as family or non-family is made on the basis of security concerns only, some staff serving at family duty stations that lack adequate schooling, housing and/or medical facilities choose not to bring their families to the duty station. Such staff are more motivated to move to a non-family duty station because they perceive that they are de facto separated from their families and incurring expenditures for dual households without the benefit of the additional non-family hardship allowance.

23. The rest and recuperation designations and cycles for field missions have also been harmonized with those of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. In line with the rest and recuperation framework set out in annex XI to the report of the ICSC (A/65/30), wherever mission transportation was available, it was provided to the extent possible to mission personnel free of charge and no payment for travel costs applied. The ICSC framework provides a regulated and systematic process for determining the rest and recuperation cycles for field duty stations, ensuring the standardization of the cycles among United Nations common system staff and therefore greater transparency and equity.

Conclusions

24. Prior to the implementation of the streamlined contractual arrangements and harmonization of conditions of service, the three series of the Staff Rules with different conditions of service created inequalities in compensation and job tenure of staff, as well as confusion among staff members as to the differences in their appointment type and conditions of service. The new contractual arrangements

under the one set of Staff Rules and harmonized conditions of service provide clarity, transparency and fairness for all staff. The new contractual arrangements, coupled with the harmonization of conditions of service in the field, have also enhanced the Organization's ability to better attract and retain staff for service in the field. This is reflected in the reduction of the vacancy rate for international staff in peacekeeping operations and special political missions from 32.5 per cent as at 30 June 2008 to 17.3 per cent as at 30 June 2013.

25. The single set of Staff Rules with common conditions of service has further streamlined the administration of contracts and enhanced consistency in the application of the Staff Rules and administrative issuances. The introduction of the single set of Staff Rules was particularly important in the context of the development and implementation of Umoja, given that it eliminated the need to develop separate processes for the wide range of different rules, appointment types, allowances and benefits under the former 100, 200 and 300 series of the Staff Rules. In addition, the streamlining of contractual arrangements and harmonization of conditions of service in the field have eliminated major barriers to the movement of staff between headquarters and the field. These are fundamental elements that will help to facilitate mobility and achievement of the objective of integrating the field and headquarters into one global Secretariat.

26. While some further refinement to the complexity of the continuing appointment review process and flexibility in the use of the temporary appointment would be welcome in the future, the Secretary-General at present does not propose any changes to the contractual arrangements, other than the transitional measure proposed in paragraph 114 below. Depending on the review by ICSC of its contractual framework, adjustments may be proposed in the future in the light of experience.

B. Talent management

1. Workforce planning

Background and imperatives

27. The General Assembly, in paragraph 16 of its resolution 66/246, reiterated its requests for the Secretary-General to formulate a strategy on succession planning for all departments of the Secretariat and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session. In response, the Secretary General provided an overview of succession planning strategies that the Secretariat was undertaking (see A/67/324). In addition, the General Assembly in paragraph 16 of its resolution 68/252, urged the Secretary-General to develop a workforce planning system as a matter of priority and to present it to the Assembly for consideration at its sixty-ninth session.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 67/255 and 68/252

28. Current workforce planning activities in the Secretariat are summarized below. While the Secretariat has made progress towards outlining a workforce planning system and reviewing best practices in other organizations, additional work is required in order to align those efforts with the current budgetary planning framework and the new mobility and career development framework.

29. The Secretariat's current workforce planning activities are outlined in table 2.

Table 2
Workforce planning activities of the United Nations Secretariat

Entity[a]	*Positions*	*Current activities*
All	Young Professionals Programme	Forecast young professionals programme staffing needs so that there are enough candidates on the examination rosters for a two-year period to meet future needs
Non-field	All	Provide entities with forecasted retirement reports based on staff retirement dates. Forecasted retirement vacancies should be advertised as anticipated job openings 12 months ahead of retirement
		Forecasted retirement reports are available to Member States for their nationals online at HR Insight. In addition, forecasted retirement reports for senior positions (P-5 to D-2) are online at HR Insight
	Language	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management prioritizes language examinations based on factors such as staffing complement, number of vacancies, projected retirements, separations during the period and status of the roster
Field operations	D, P, Field Service	Ongoing assessments are made to identify vacancy gaps in occupational rosters, including with regard to Arabic and French language skills, which are to be filled through generic job openings
		Identify immediate and hard-to-fill positions to be filled through position-specific job openings

[a] Non-field operations include departments/offices, regional commissions and tribunals. Field operations include missions and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and special political missions of thematic clusters III (political offices, peacebuilding support offices and integrated offices) and IV (United Nations assistance missions).

Next steps

30. Establishing an effective workforce planning process and institutionalizing workforce planning as a new management discipline in the Secretariat will require significant effort. In February 2014, the Office of Human Resources Management, in conjunction with the Department of Field Support, launched a project to develop a workforce planning system that could be applied across the Secretariat. A workforce planning advisory group was established, composed of individuals working in various departments and offices with relevant experience in talent management, strategic planning and budgeting. In the initial phase and the conceptual design of the project (February-May 2014), the team reviewed current workforce planning practices and lessons learned, developed a vision and new methodology for workforce planning, and conducted a pilot project with the Medical Services Division of the Office of Human Resources Management.

31. Since the initiative is still in its infancy, additional pilot projects are required and emphasis needs to be placed on testing and learning through doing while

building workforce planning capacity within the human resources community in both field and non-field operations.

32. Under the new mobility and career development policy, many aspects of talent management previously undertaken by programme managers, such as selection decisions, will now be carried out by job network boards with the support of network staffing teams. This represents a shift from the vertical talent management approach (i.e. focused on an entity) to one of horizontal talent management (i.e. focused on a job network, the membership of which transcends organizational structure). Job network boards and network staffing teams will therefore need to be engaged in the workforce planning process to provide the horizontal perspectives with regard to recruitment and talent development priorities.

33. The Secretariat will also continue to link organization and position management in Umoja in order to ensure that changes to the process and the system are delivered in line with the requirements of workforce planning. It is also recognized that additional improvements to Inspira will be required insofar as items such as a skills inventory will be particularly useful for supporting both workforce planning and the new mobility policy. In order to develop and implement a robust workforce planning system, a significant investment of resources and time will be required. Given the limited resources and other priorities in the human resources reform effort, implementation will be phased over a number of years. It is envisaged that the timeline will be aligned with the phased deployment of the new mobility and career development framework (see A/69/190/Add.1).

2. Staff selection and recruitment

34. With the approval by the General Assembly in resolution 68/265 of the mobility and career development framework presented by the Secretary-General (A/68/358), the Organization will be establishing new policies and procedures to govern selection and reassignment under the framework (see A/69/190/Add.1). Given that the new mobility framework will be implemented in a phased manner beginning in 2016, the current staff selection system (as amended) will continue for those job networks that are not yet operational under the mobility framework.[1] Therefore, the Organization will continue to make improvements in staff selection and recruitment so as to ensure that those improvements are reflected in the new policies being developed to implement the mobility framework. Updated information on current staff selection timelines, improvements to the young professionals programme and ongoing efforts to improve gender representation and the representation of developing countries is provided below.

(a) Staff selection timelines

Background and imperatives

35. In resolution 63/250, the General Assembly approved contractual reforms that helped to create a single, integrated global Secretariat, emphasized that transparency

[1] In other words, until such time as a job network is operational (at which point job network boards will make recommendations for selections against vacant positions and reassignment of serving staff), the selection process will continue to operate in much the same manner as it currently does under administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/3. Additional information on the new mobility and career development framework can be found in A/69/190/Add.1.

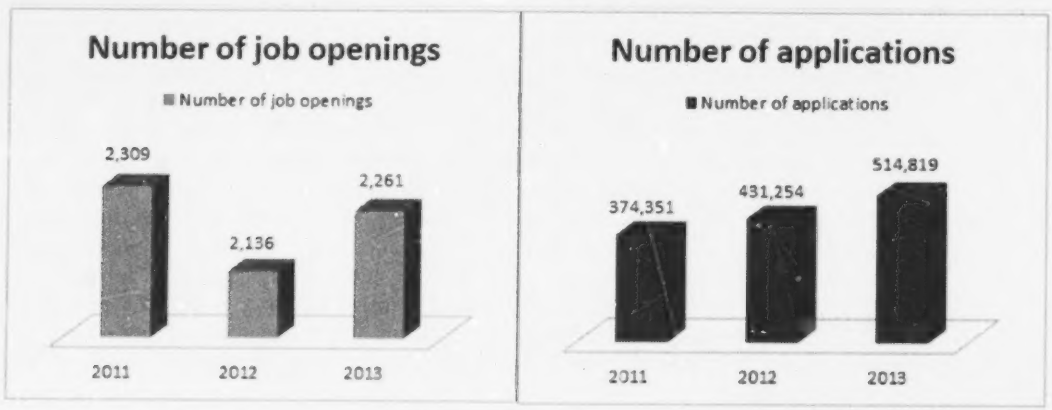
and non-discrimination must be ensured in the staff selection system and requested the Secretary-General to ensure that all anticipated and immediate vacancies be properly advertised and filled quickly. It was stressed that, in the new staff selection process, transparency needed to be ensured for both applicants and hiring managers. In response, the Under-Secretary-General for Management promulgated the new policy governing the staff selection (ST/AI/2010/3) and launched the new United Nations careers portal and the e-staffing tool, Inspira.

36. Inspira enables applicants and hiring managers to readily access updated information on the status of applications and vacancies. Inspira also automatically screens applications on the basis of the minimum eligibility and thus eases the burden of hiring managers in the screening of applications.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/250

37. Beyond the actions addressed in the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/67/324, para. 34), the deployment of Inspira to field missions commenced on 31 January 2013 and was completed in July 2014. All field missions now issue and process all job openings in Inspira. The volume of job openings and the number of applications have steadily increased since the launch of Inspira in April 2010 (see fig.). Inspira now serves as the Organization's online platform for recruitment. It has enabled consolidation of all data pertaining to recruitment and the creation of a global roster through the integration of field and non-field rosters.

Number of job openings and applications, 2011-2013[a]



Note: Job openings include standard job openings, continuous job openings, job openings for D-2 positions, recruitment from rosters, young professionals programme examinations and language examinations.

[a] Numbers of job openings and applications comprise all job openings for all levels, including locally recruited staff as well as young professionals programme and language examinations which were advertised in Inspira during the respective calendar years.

38. Additional steps have been taken by the Office of Human Resources Management and the Department of Field Support to address the delays in the recruitment process. These steps include a business process review exercise conducted by Office and an analysis of the human resources management scorecard which have been used to investigate the reasons for delays in the recruitment process.

39. The business process review, initiated in 2013, is specifically designed to identify delays and bottlenecks in the processing of job openings in Inspira. Through the review, a number of issues that cause delays in posting of job openings have been identified. These are mainly:

- Inconsistencies in the bases for job openings including generic job profiles and job descriptions
- Unclear roles and responsibilities of process owners
- Cumbersome workflow
- Inconsistent screening questions
- Lack of sufficient training.

40. Steps are being taken to develop ways to address the above-mentioned issues.

41. The current staff selection process takes 213 days on average, from the initiation of a job opening to eventual selection (see table 3). This is 62 days over the current target of 143 days. The Office of Human Resources Management has begun to use the human resources management scorecard to analyse individual job openings for which there have been significant delays beyond the projected target days and to identify the issues causing those delays. Following on from the analysis, the Office of Human Resources Management has initiated meetings with executive offices in client departments, during which the scorecard performance and individual cases are discussed. The meetings are also used to discuss and address any issues pertaining to recruitment and to strengthen the partnership with the respective department.

Table 3
Staffing timeline (including both roster and non-roster selections)[a]

	Target	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*
1. Job requisition approval	2	13	6	5
2. Job posting request approval	2	3	3	2
3. Job opening building	8	21	18	10
4. Job opening detail approval	2	8	5	5
5. Pre-job posting	9	3	4	4
6. Initial human resources assessment	5	13	14	11
7. Recommendation of candidates	40	113	126	134
8. Status review	3	16	7	7
9. Central Review Board endorsement	7	19	15	16
10. Selection by the head of department/office	5	21	19	19
Total duration of actions within senior managers' compact target of total target of 143 days	**83**	**230**	**216**	**213**
Total duration of actions within 120-day target mandated by General Assembly (actions 6 to 10)	**60**	**182**	**180**	**186**

Note: Targets exclude advertising time of 60 days.

[a] Roster selections for job openings in field missions are included only in data for 2013 as the deployment of Inspira to field missions commenced on 31 January 2013.

42. In addition, in order to support managers in performing their recruitment functions effectively and efficiently, including the use of the Inspira platform, the Secretariat has conducted monthly workshops and initiated an assessment pilot project.

43. Monthly workshops are conducted for hiring managers and executive offices across departments at headquarters. During these workshops, information on policies as well as operational procedures are discussed in order to ensure a clear understanding and more consistent interpretation of recruitment activities. Since February 2014, subject-specific workshops on how to build job openings and how to evaluate candidates in a more effective and efficient manner have also been launched with a view to assisting hiring managers further in speeding up the recruitment timeline. Attendance has been high during these sessions and the feedback from the attendees has been positive.

44. Analysis using the human resources management scorecard revealed that one of the steps causing delays in the recruitment process is in the recommendation of candidates. The reason for the delay is the increasing number of applicants, which means that hiring managers spend a significant amount of time manually reviewing all eligible applicants. At present, after a job opening closes, a hiring manager must manually review each applicant screened-in by Inspira to determine his or her suitability for the position. This evaluation entails the subjective review of on average 200 to 400 applications for P-3/P-4 job openings and up to more than 800 applications for certain job families. The fact that every application has to be manually reviewed limits how quickly a hiring manager can complete this task.

45. To address the concern of hiring managers taking too long to review applications and recommend candidates, an assessment project was developed using a two-pronged approach, namely: (a) conduct of workshops for hiring managers on how to efficiently and effectively build valid, reliable tests; and (b) development and administration of specialized, online substantive knowledge tests for job openings for which there are large numbers of applicants; the tests would be given to the applicants screened-in by Inspira and, based on the results of the tests, a shortlist of suitable candidates would be created and forwarded to the hiring manager for further assessment. A pilot online test conducted for five job openings proved that the time that the hiring managers had to spend on manually reviewing applications was significantly reduced.

Next steps

46. The mobility framework was approved in April 2014 and implementation will begin from 1 January 2016, starting with the political, peace and security job network (POLNET). Implementation of mobility will affect the staff selection system as a number of changes will have to be made to the current staff selection system. The current staffing selection system, however, must continue to run on a parallel basis until the mobility framework is launched for all job networks. The Office of Human Resources Management, together with the Department of Field Support, will continue to work to improve the performance of the Organization in terms of staff selection and recruitment. As part of this effort, and based on the experience gained from the assessment pilot project (see para. 45), the Office of Human Resources Management will further explore the application of the online assessment approach to recruitment across the Organization.

(b) Global General Service Test

47. To harmonize and enhance the assessment for staff in the General Service category, the Office of Human Resources Management has developed a new test for recruitment for positions in the General Service and related categories, namely, the Global General Service Test which was launched in July 2014.[2] The Global General Service Test has replaced the Administrative Support Assessment Test, which was originally developed in the 1980s and revised again in the late 1990s. All candidates applying to positions in the General Service category had to pass the Administrative Support Assessment Test to be eligible to apply for such positions. The aim of the test was to examine the basic set of aptitudes and knowledge needed to perform satisfactory in an office environment. The test was conducted at Headquarters and at offices away from Headquarters, although results were not recognized across duty stations prior to 2010. In 2011, the Office of Human Resources Management undertook a review of the Administrative Support Assessment Test and decided to develop a global test that was consistent across the Organization. Following an extensive job analysis of core functions in the General Service and related categories, the Office identified the core knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform such functions and developed the Global General Service Test, which will be computer-based and conducted in a proctored environment.

(c) Young professionals programme

Background and imperatives

48. The General Assembly, in its resolution 65/247, approved the young professionals programme and requested the Secretary-General to report to it on the implementation of the programme.

Progress made since adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/250

49. The technological improvements and other enhancements implemented under the young professionals programme have resulted in improved programme effectiveness and delivery.

50. Under the programme, despite a dramatic increase in the number of applicants, the overall examination cycle, from the posting of the job opening for the examinations until the release of results, has been reduced to 12 months. With the help of Inspira, screening and convocation have become much more streamlined, with an average of 5,263 candidates convoked each year to the written examination of the programme. Participation of nationals of Member States has dramatically increased under the programme, and the number of Member States with successful candidates has also increased.

Next steps

51. The Office of Human Resources Management envisages revision of both the current format (three-part test, including specialized paper, general paper and oral interview) and the test delivery methods (currently all manual, paper-based, with

[2] The Global General Service Test will not be applicable to locally recruited staff in field missions.

physical proctoring by United Nations staff). More details on the progress of the young professionals programme and next steps are provided in A/69/190/Add.3.

(d) Outreach

52. The Organization continues to make significant outreach efforts to unrepresented and underrepresented States through the dedicated unit established in 2008 in the Office of Human Resources Management Additional information on outreach activities is provided in A/69/190/Add.3, information on geographical representation is contained in the report entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292) and information on a review of the system of desirable ranges can be found in A/69/190/Add.4.

53. For field missions, outreach continued to target troop- and police-contributing countries. Current efforts include working with regional networks to create outreach multipliers, creating information products tailored to candidates from these regions and partnering with the African Union and civil societies, especially with regard to Arabic and French speakers.

54. In terms of measuring the impact of outreach, statistics demonstrate that approximately 4 per cent of the visitors to the careers portal arrive there directly from social media. In addition, a new feature in Inspira was designed to better capture data regarding individuals who apply for jobs and outreach. The number of applicants who indicated that they had applied as a result of outreach activities increased from 28,031 in 2012 to 39,126 in the first half of 2014.[3] This indicates that outreach activities have had an increasing effect on applications.

Efforts to achieve gender parity

Background and imperatives

55. In paragraph 69 of its resolution 65/247, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to increase his efforts to attain and monitor the goal of gender parity in the Secretariat, in particular at senior levels, and in that context to ensure that women, especially those from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, were appropriately represented within the Secretariat. In paragraph 43 of its resolution 67/255, the General Assembly expressed serious concern that progress towards the goal of 50/50 gender balance in the United Nations system had remained elusive, and reiterated its requests to the Secretary-General to increase his efforts to attain and monitor the goal of gender parity in the Secretariat.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 65/247 and 67/255

56. The ratio of female staff to total staff has remained stable from June 2009 to June 2013 at around 33 per cent. Gaps remain, particularly at the senior levels, namely, P-5 and above. Within the Secretariat, as at 31 March 2014, women accounted for 32 per cent of staff at the P-5 level, 30 per cent of staff at the D-1 level, and 27 per cent of staff at the D-2 level. One of the main reasons for this is that there are significantly fewer female applicants than male applicants. During the

[3] The deployment of Inspira to field missions commenced on 31 January 2013 and was completed in July 2014.

period from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2013, only 25 per cent of applicants for senior positions (P-5 to D-2) were women (although they made up 37 per cent of the selected candidates).

57. During the reporting period, efforts to improve gender representation continued. In October 2013, the Secretariat conducted a survey of staff at the P-4 level and above to understand what attributes mid-senior leaders in the Secretariat shared, with a view to targeting outreach to promote and attract diverse female professionals to apply for senior positions. Of the overall population surveyed, 25 per cent responded. Among respondents, 134 nationalities were represented and 45 per cent were female. Following the survey, as part of a comparative study of gender parity at senior levels, the personal history profiles of female D-2s were analysed and compared with female leaders in the governmental and private sectors to determine the shared characteristics that contribute to the advancement of women. By understanding the attributes that women in leadership positions share, the Secretariat can target women with these attributes and encourage them to apply for senior positions.

58. In March 2014, the Secretariat launched a video "Women of the United Nations working to make a difference". The video, available in all six official languages, was designed to attract women to apply for positions at all levels, across all occupational groups, including in the field. In addition, the Secretariat collaborates closely with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on outreach efforts and tailored approaches to attract and retain women, particularly at senior levels. The human resources management scorecard is used as a tool to hold all Under-Secretaries-General accountable on gender parity. The scorecard contains several measures, including (a): percentage of female staff in all categories of posts; (b) percentage of female staff in P-5, D-1 and D-2 posts; (c) percentage of females at the P-1 through P-4 levels; and (d) percentage of females in General Service categories. These indicators are monitored by the Performance Review Group and the Management Performance Board. The Outreach Unit has met with almost all departments/offices that had not met their gender targets as at 31 March 2014. These departments/offices have prepared, or are in the process of preparing, outreach strategies to increase gender representation.

59. In 2013, the Department of Field Support undertook a study on bridging the gender gap in peace operations, which identified challenges encountered by field operations in attracting and retaining women. As a follow-up to the findings and recommendations of the study, the Department of Field Support launched a call for applications from Member States, civil society, professional organizations with a view to developing a pipeline of senior women at the D-1 and D-2 levels for jobs in field missions. Sixty-four external highly qualified women were placed in the pipeline, in the areas of rule of law, political and civil affairs and public information. The project has shown positive results, with three women selected within a short period after its launch.

Next steps

60. The Office of Human Resources Management will continue its collaboration with UN-Women and other entities in the United Nations system, including the Department of Field Support/the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Safety and Security, in developing a system-wide strategy to facilitate the advancement to

senior positions of women already within the Organization and on outreach targeting qualified external female candidates. This will bring together a number of activities and processes designed to ensure a cohesive approach and a clear and uniform strategy. In addition, the Secretariat will finalize its study of gender parity at senior levels, compared with female leaders in the governmental and private sectors, to determine what, if any, shared attributes might contribute to advancing their numbers, with a particular focus on attracting more internal and external women to apply for positions in the Secretariat at the P-5 level and above.

Efforts to improve the representation of developing countries

Background and imperatives

61. The General Assembly, in paragraph 64 of its resolution 65/247, reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to present proposals to effectively increase the representation of developing countries in the Secretariat.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 65/247

62. The number of developing countries that are unrepresented and underrepresented in the Secretariat has decreased in the period from 2011 to 2013. At the end of 2011, 45 developing countries fell into those categories, while at the end of 2013 only 35 of 138 developing countries were unrepresented or underrepresented.

63. The flagship outreach tool for the Organization is the careers portal. Of the 19 million visits to the portal during the reporting period, over 6.3 million (33 per cent) were by those accessing the website from a developing country. The countries in this category with the highest number of hits were, in descending order, India, Kenya, China, Brazil, Indonesia, Pakistan, Mexico, Uganda, Côte d'Ivoire and the Philippines.

64. As part of the outreach mentioned above, activities are conducted with both individual developing countries and regional hubs where a large number of developing countries would be represented. Outreach activities have also been undertaken in cooperation with other departments and offices, including the Department of Field Support, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Safety and Security, to attract more applicants from developing countries, especially those with language skills in Arabic or French, which are in demand. This has included collaborating with the Governments of the countries concerned; visiting universities, professional organizations and relevant non-governmental organizations; and advertising in online professional job websites and widely read publications. Social media are also utilized to reach out to nationals of developing countries. The developing countries from which the Organization's social media sites are most frequently accessed include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Nepal, Nigeria, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Africa, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Uganda and Viet Nam.

Next steps

65. The Secretariat will continue to utilize its social media networks and virtual career fairs to promote opportunities at the Secretariat and to work with Member States on outreach activities specific to the needs of their nationals. The Office of Human Resources Management will continue to collaborate with the Department of

Field Support in the identification of candidates from troop- and police-contributing countries. Outreach will continue to be closely coordinated with the young professionals programme in order to ensure that a wide range of nationals of participating Member States are made aware of the opportunity. The Secretariat has developed an outreach talent database which contains the contact details of governmental and intergovernmental organizations, universities, non-governmental organizations, individuals and professional associations throughout the world. This database can be searched to target specific professional associations or other entities. As indicated in paragraph 54 above, Inspira data are analysed to measure the impact of outreach activities and further develop outreach activities.

3. Performance management

Background and imperatives

66. The Organization has been engaged in an ongoing effort to strengthen its performance management system in order to ensure the highest performance by its staff members and to support and develop them as required. Performance management is a critical area of management reform, particularly because of its link to continuing appointments and downsizing and/or retrenchment exercises which take into account staff performance and should, therefore, be based on an underlying performance management system that is credible and with which staff and managers comply. Continual changes have been made to the system's various components; these include the introduction, in 2010, of a revised performance management policy, the Inspira e-performance tool and an oversight mechanism to meet evolving needs and to respond to the requests of Member States. The General Assembly, in paragraph 5 of its resolution 68/252, welcomed the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General to develop a refined framework, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it for consideration at its sixty-ninth session a comprehensive performance management proposal, including all necessary modalities and recommendations.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/250

67. While the changes made in 2010 have improved the performance system and been well received, staff, management and Member States are all agreed that a number of key challenges remain and that the Secretariat must go further and build on the improvements already made. The Organization has therefore carried out extensive research on the performance management systems of other organizations and held consultations with Member States, staff (including a Staff-Management Committee working group dedicated to this issue), managers and the senior leadership of the Organization. The research and consultations have led to the conclusion that the Secretariat's performance management system is generally consistent with best practice but that it needs targeted change in some critical areas. The Secretariat, therefore, has developed proposed amendments to the performance management system that do not overhaul the current system entirely but rather aim to reform key areas in response to the concerns of the staff, management and leadership of the Organization and the concerns of Member States. The proposal consists of four elements: (a) increased accountability for performance management, particularly at the managerial and leadership levels; (b) simplification of the performance management policy (see ST/AI/2010/5 and Corr.1) and Inspira e-performance tool; (c) an improved management culture; and (e) clarification of how to effectively address underperformance.

68. The proposed refinements to the performance management system were presented to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly at an information briefing in May 2014, and to the Staff-Management Committee for review and consultation in June 2014. Detailed information on the proposal is contained in an addendum to the present report (A/69/190/Add.2).

Next steps

69. The General Assembly is asked to review the proposed revisions to the performance management system contained in A/69/190/Add.2 and to endorse the proposals.

4. Learning and career development

Background and imperatives

70. Learning and career support in the United Nations Secretariat is complex and widely dispersed among various entities. There are several reasons for this, including differences in mandates, governing and oversight bodies, operations, funding sources, client and target audiences, and external learning and support partners. The purposes of learning can also vary: some are driven by mandates or operational needs on the ground, while others aim to develop shared values and competencies across the Organization or to support career development.

71. In 2012, the Secretariat began to explore a more strategic approach to learning and career support in order to make more effective use of resources in this complex landscape, and during a time of financial constraint. Several issues were identified, including the need for a central authority or mechanism to set or validate corporate learning and career support priorities and to determine which programmes should be mandatory. It was also clear that learning programmes and tools needed to be more accessible to staff, especially those in the field, and that a mechanism was needed for information sharing and collaboration among departments and offices with learning resources.

72. The Secretariat therefore developed a new strategy to address the above-mentioned challenges and launched a new approach to learning and career support. The strategy, which was approved by the Management Committee in June 2014, will provide the basis and structures needed to strengthen learning and career support in the Secretariat and will do so in a more cost-effective way.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/255

73. The approval of the learning and career support strategy in June 2014 was the culmination of extensive consultations beginning in 2012, held with learning professionals from across the Secretariat. The strategy has three key elements: a new strategic oversight role for the Management Committee, with the ability to set corporate or cross-cutting learning priorities; a focus on increasing access to learning resources by more staff in the global Secretariat; and the goal of improving career support programmes, tools and resources.

74. The strategic oversight role of the Management Committee will allow it to set corporate priorities, thus addressing the challenges caused by the existence of many disparate entities with learning resources. This role of the Management Committee

will also eliminate the need for the Learning Advisory Board, which had an advisory role but no oversight or decision-making function.

75. In May 2014, the Management Committee carried out its new role by approving three organizational priorities for the period 2014-2016: the development of core learning for all staff, which would ensure a standard level of organizational knowledge, skills and abilities and instil a common corporate culture; improvement of management and leadership capacity; and provision of support to staff facing organizational change.

76. The second key element of the strategy is to ensure that all parts of the Secretariat increase access to learning for their target populations. This will address a key problem currently encountered by many staff, whereby many programmes and resources are not available to them at their locations. Learning managers will be encouraged to make better use of available technologies that can reach many more staff than the traditional, face-to-face classes, which will be reserved for situations where face-to-face learning is recognized as a chief learning objective. Increased access to standard programmes is also linked to consistency, that is, the need not only to increase the number of staff in the target audiences that have access to learning, but also to ensure that the product delivered is consistent across offices and duty stations and therefore supports the common organizational culture.

77. The Office of Human Resources Management continued to expand access to its core learning and career support programmes through new online technologies. Several informational and skills development programmes that were previously conducted in a face-to-face format are now delivered through online conferencing tools or through online, self-paced programmes. With online conferencing tools, many staff can join a virtual classroom with a live trainer, or individual staff can connect with a trainer for a career counselling session. Online, self-paced learning programmes have pre-recorded audio and video components and interactive components, such as quizzes and surveys.

78. The third element of the strategy is to improve career support, that is, to provide all staff with learning that allows them to perform their current functions more efficiently, as well as with the career support and skills-building tools that will enable them to change positions in the future and provide them with opportunities to obtain wide experience in the Organization. This will address current gaps in the information, guidance and tools that are available to staff in planning their careers. The Office of Human Resources Management is developing new tools and programmes that communicate transparent and realistic information about career opportunities, in accordance with the mobility framework.

79. The language and communications programmes have continued to expand their resources and services. In 2013, an online language learning tool was piloted; 1,000 staff members had used this self-paced tool as of April 2014. The rate of delivery of specialized courses through online conferencing has increased. The success of that technology has been encouraging and the language programme is researching how it can be further utilized. Furthermore, a new online language testing system has been launched at United Nations Headquarters and will be progressively deployed at other United Nations Secretariat duty stations.

80. In 2013, an induction programme was introduced for newly-appointed senior leaders at the Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General levels. The

programme was developed with the aim of ensuring that the Organization's leaders are informed on a variety of substantive and administrative topics that are integral to their level of responsibility and leadership. The programme will be offered to senior leaders in headquarters departments and field operations.

81. Finally, the Secretariat has also increased its use of the enterprise learning management module in Inspira as a registration and hosting platform for the centrally coordinated programmes conducted by the Office of Human Resources Management and for other departments and offices. During the reporting period, the module was also deployed in some offices away from Headquarters and is expected to be deployed to all duty stations by 2016. In cooperation with the Department of Field Support, even staff serving at very remote duty stations can now access these programmes. The enterprise learning management module has streamlined some aspects of learning administration and increased the ability to consolidate materials and track participant data, although full tracking across the Secretariat will not be possible until the system has been fully deployed.

82. For the biennium 2014-2015, $22.4 million from the regular budget is dedicated to learning programmes. This amount is less than the 2 per cent of staff costs, the level considered to be a minimum in best practice, which was formally endorsed by the Human Resources Network on behalf of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in 2003. The figure does not include the funding provisions for training and learning from the budgets for peacekeeping missions and the support account. Other extrabudgetary resources are also used on a case-by-case basis to support specialized learning and training needs related, for example, to safety and security, and humanitarian and post-conflict response, as well as for training related to operational improvements, such as the introduction of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Umoja.

Next steps

83. In the coming year, the Office of Human Resources Management will work with its partners across the Secretariat to implement the three key elements of the strategy and deliver on its three corporate priorities for the period 2014-2016.

84. One key product will be a new induction platform which will ensure that induction programmes for new staff are standardized across the Secretariat.

85. The Office of Human Resources Management will continue to deploy the enterprise learning management module in Inspira across the Organization in 2014 and 2015, with a view to completing its deployment by early 2016.

C. Staff health and well-being

Background and imperatives

86. The core functions of the Medical Services Division, set out in Secretary General's bulletin ST/SGB/2011/4, include promotion of staff health, management of risks in the workplace, and provision of medical advice and of advice on medico-administrative issues. Across the Secretariat, the annual impact of absenteeism

(certified or uncertified) is on average estimated to be the equivalent of 539 staff.[4] The activities of the Division contribute to the management of this and other health-related risks which compromise the Organization's ability to effectively and efficiently implement its mandates.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/255

87. In 2013, the Medical Services Division developed a strategic plan which has three fundamental goals: to achieve a measurable reduction in preventable staff harm; to achieve a measurable reduction in expenditure on health-related issues; and to achieve a measurable improvement in staff satisfaction. These goals link to an over-arching purpose of ensuring excellence in occupational health services for United Nations staff and managers. To achieve that purpose, the Medical Services Division must be transformed from an entity primarily focused on transactions processing (sick leave, medical evacuation and clearances) to one leading and overseeing the systems of occupational health (both administrative and clinical) that keep the Organization's workforce fit for duty.

88. The strategic plan focuses on client service, strategic collaboration and the development of tools, resources and services that meet client needs. The clients of the Medical Services Division are individual staff members, the health-care professionals in the field, the Secretariat departments, and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Each of these client groups is specifically addressed in the strategic plan.

Long-term sick leave and disability

89. After a broad consultation process, a Secretary-General's bulletin on employment and accessibility for staff members with disabilities in the United Nations Secretariat has been issued (ST/SGB/2014/3). The bulletin sets out measures taken to implement a number of General Assembly resolutions aimed at creating a non-discriminatory and inclusive working environment for staff members with disabilities. It establishes United Nations policy on access to facilities, employment opportunities and availability of reasonable accommodation for these staff members.

90. The Medical Services Division is increasing its monitoring of staff on long-term sick leave (i.e. longer than 20 consecutive days) and is embarking on a process to import current best practice in case management in an attempt to secure an early return to work wherever possible. In the Division's two most frequent diagnostic categories (mental health and musculoskeletal disorders), an early return to work has a positive impact on outcomes, with prolonged leave leading to a poorer prognosis.

91. In 2012, 10 per cent of the staff who took sick leave recorded by the Division had a mental health diagnosis. The days lost to work from these diagnoses accounted for 21 per cent of the total number of days taken as certified sick leave. In 2012,

[4] The number is calculated as the average yearly number of staff absent on sick leave. The information is derived from the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) and includes sick leave (certified and uncertified) for the period April 2011 to March 2013. The number of sick days is converted to full-time staff positions by dividing the number of days by 220 (220 being considered the number of working days in a year). The population excludes a number of staff members, such as those on when-actually-employed contracts in the INT, R and T categories, and all staff in field operations and the tribunals. The total number of staff included in the calculation is 16,052 (calculated as an average over the two years as at 30 June).

almost 4,560 work days were lost to sick leave related to mental health diagnoses, the equivalent of 21 positions. This does not take into account low productivity and workplace disruptions when staff members with mental health diagnoses are at work while unwell.

92. In addition, approximately 40 per cent of the disability pensions awarded by the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund are based on a mental health diagnosis, while the worldwide percentage is approximately 25 per cent.

Next steps

93. Specific measures to address mental health challenges are under implementation, inter alia, a staff survey, and capacity-building in health professionals and in the staff at large, with particular attention paid to increasing managerial capacity to manage the impact of health conditions in the workplace. The Medical Services Division is also ensuring that staff will have access to quality care at all duty stations, with initiatives to assess mental health infrastructure and offer services such a telepsychiatry where needed.

D. System of desirable ranges

Background and imperatives

94. The General Assembly, in paragraph 46 of its resolution 67/255, requested the Secretary-General to present to it proposals with a view to establishing a more effective tool for ensuring equitable geographical distribution in relation to the posts financed through the regular budget.

Progress made since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 65/247

95. The addendum (A/69/190/Add.4) to the present report presents a comprehensive review of the system of desirable ranges. In addition, the General Assembly, in paragraph 48 of its resolution 67/255, requested the Secretary-General to make available, through HR Insight, on a quarterly basis, data on the representation of developing countries in the Secretariat. Since September 2013, HR Insight has had a dashboard screen which each month shows the representation status by economic grouping,[5] along with numbers of staff and Member States, in addition to detailed information for each Member State.

E. Permanent resident status

Request of the General Assembly

96. In section III, paragraph 1, of its resolution 60/238, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-first session on the practice of United Nations staff members having to renounce permanent resident status in a country outside the country of their nationality.

[5] Economic grouping according to the classification used by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Composition of macrogeographical (continental) regions, geographical subregions, and selected economic and other groupings", revised 31 October 2013 (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm).

97. As requested, the Secretary-General provided such a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session and invited a reconsideration of the requirement for staff members to renounce permanent resident status (A/61/228 and Corr.1). At that session, the General Assembly did not consider the matter. At its sixty-fourth session, the Secretary-General reported to the General Assembly on the new Staff Rules related to the implementation of the new contractual arrangements approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/250 (A/64/230). As part of that report, the Secretary-General highlighted the issue of renouncing permanent resident status as an outstanding matter and reiterated his invitation to the General Assembly to reconsider the policy that required staff members to renounce permanent resident status in a country other than the country of their nationality before recruitment.

98. In its resolution 65/247, the General Assembly took note of paragraphs 84 and 85 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/65/537), in which the Committee had recommended revisiting the policy in the light of changing circumstances, and took note also of the report of the Secretary-General. In the same resolution, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the issue until its sixty-sixth session. At that session, the General Assembly considered the various reports before it (see resolution 66/234) but took no action regarding the issue of renouncing permanent resident status. The General Assembly is requested to reconsider the issue of renouncing permanent resident status, in the light of recent judgments from the Appeals Tribunal.

Background

99. The requirement to renounce permanent resident status stems from a long-standing policy articulated by the General Assembly in 1953. In December of that year, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recommended that persons in permanent resident status should in future be ineligible for appointment as internationally recruited staff members unless they were prepared to change to a G4 visa status, or equivalent status in host countries other than the United States of America (A/2581, para. 10). The Fifth Committee subsequently confirmed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, noting the widely shared view that international officials should be true representatives of the culture and personality of the country of which they were nationals, and that those who elected to break their ties with that country could no longer claim to fulfil the conditions governing employment in the United Nations (A/2615, paras. 69 and 70).

100. In 1954, the Staff Rules were amended to provide that staff members who acquired permanent resident status in the country of their duty station would no longer be eligible for certain international benefits, and to require staff members intending to acquire permanent resident status or change their nationality to notify the Secretary-General before such change became final. Current staff rule 1.5 (c) contains the same provisions.

101. The Secretariat has consistently applied the requirement to renounce permanent resident status prior to recruitment for service on appointments of more than one year. The requirement has been understood to apply to all internationally recruited staff members, irrespective of whether the permanent resident status to be renounced is in the country of the duty station or elsewhere. The most recent issuance setting out the requirement is administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/19, which provides for a limited number of exemptions, for example: stateless persons;

staff members in the General Service and related categories; staff members appointed to serve under the previous 200 or 300 series of the Staff Rules; or staff members appointed for less than one year.

102. While the Secretary-General has implemented the policy, he has at the same time brought to the General Assembly's attention concerns which merit reconsideration of the policy. These concerns include: (a) the increasing number of staff members who serve at non-family duty stations while their families reside in the country of the spouse and not in the country of the staff member; (b) since the contractual reforms, a higher number of staff are serving on fixed-term appointments which normally carry no expectation of renewal; and (c) mobility has become an essential part of the conditions of employment. Moreover, the Staff Rules have always permitted staff to retain nationality in more than one country. As a result of these concerns, the Secretary-General proposed the abolishment of staff rule 1.5 (c), which formed the basis for the policy that requires staff to renounce permanent residence status.

103. Moreover, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions expressed the view that the policy requiring staff to renounce permanent residence status should be revisited in the light of changing circumstances, including the shift in family situations from national to international settings and the desirability of having a more mobile workforce (A/65/537). At the same time, the Committee reiterated its view that, with the increasing use of fixed-term appointments, it might not be entirely fair to require a candidate to give up permanent resident status so that he or she could take up a position that might last only two or three years. It also commented that it was unreasonable to expect serving staff members to make a choice between maintaining their permanent resident status and continuing their employment with the Organization.

Recent developments

104. While the former United Nations Administrative Tribunal upheld the requirement to renounce permanent resident status,[6] in recent judgements, the United Nations Appeals Tribunal has concluded that the policy has no legal basis since it is not reflected in any administrative issuance. From 2012, the Appeals Tribunal has found that when the Fifth Committee had decided the policy, it had required that its decisions were to be given effect "through appropriate amendments to the Staff Rules" and that the Secretary-General had not fully complied with the Fifth Committee's requirement for implementation of its decision (A/2615).[7] Moreover, the Appeals Tribunal found that, given that the geographical distribution of staff recruitment is based on nationality and not on resident status, the policy could not be justified on the basis of ensuring geographical distribution of staff members. It further observed that "[b]earing in mind human rights principles and modern law of employment, this policy has no place in a modern international organization".[8]

105. Although the judgements of the Appeals Tribunal did not involve the issue of permanent resident status in the United States of America, the implication of those judgements is that the Appeals Tribunal would likely find that the requirement in

[6] *Fischman*, judgement No. 326 (1984), and *Moawad*, judgement No. 819 (1997).

[7] See also United Nations Appeals Tribunal, judgement No. 2012-UNAT-276 (*Valimaki-Erk*) and judgement No. 2013-UNAT-342 (*Manco*).

[8] Ibid., judgement No. 2012-UNAT-276 (*Valimaki-Erk*), para. 7.

administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/19 to renounce permanent resident status imposes an obligation not foreseen by the Staff Rules and is, consequently, unlawful.

106. As a result of the judgements of the Appeals Tribunal, the Secretariat has, since November 2013 and on an exceptional basis, granted staff members in the Professional category permission to retain permanent resident status in a country other than their country of nationality, subject to the General Assembly's reconsideration of the issue. The acquisition or retention of permanent resident status in the United States has a further procedural step whereby staff members are required to sign a waiver of the rights, privileges, exemptions and immunities that would accrue to them as staff members. In order to sign the waiver, staff members must request the Organization's permission. As the same concerns apply to this procedural step, staff members have been exceptionally granted permission to sign the waiver. Staff members who have been exceptionally granted permission to retain or acquire permanent resident status have been informed that, following the General Assembly's consideration of the issues outlined in the present report, they may be required to renounce their permanent resident status as a condition of any extension, renewal or other form of subsequent appointment.

Implications of maintaining permanent resident status outside the country of nationality

107. The policy of requiring staff members to renounce their permanent resident status in countries outside their country of nationality was adopted to address concerns related to geographical representation and the potential financial implications of staff members retaining or acquiring permanent resident status. Should the General Assembly decide to no longer retain the policy, the assessment of geographical representation would not be affected by the acquisition or retention of permanent resident status by staff members. Staff members, including those holding permanent resident status, are listed by the Organization according to the country of their recognized nationality.

108. There may, however, be financial implications with regard to income tax reimbursements and entitlements. Staff regulation 3.3 (f) provides for refunds where a staff member is subject to both staff assessment and national income taxation on salaries and emoluments paid by the United Nations. That taxation is not exclusively linked to nationality but also to permanent resident status, such as in the United States of America.

109. With respect to staff salaries financed from assessed funds, under financial regulation 4.10, deductions for staff assessment are credited to a tax equalization fund. Under financial regulation 4.11, the revenue in the tax equalization fund is used to refund to staff members income taxes levied by Member States. Where a Member State's credit in the tax equalization fund is insufficient for this purpose, the shortfall is added to and recovered from assessed contributions due from that Member State in the subsequent financial period. If it is necessary to provide more staff members with income tax reimbursements as a result of taxes levied by the Member States in which they have permanent resident status, there would be a corresponding increase in withdrawals from the deposits of the tax equalization fund.

110. With respect to staff salaries financed from non-assessed funds, such as voluntary contributions made by Member States to trust funds, under financial rule 4.11, such sources of funds do not contribute to the tax equalization fund. As a

result, where income tax is levied upon salaries and emoluments, the additional costs for tax reimbursement are borne by the sources of the funds. Therefore, an increase in the number of staff members who encumber posts financed from non-assessed funds and who acquire or retain permanent resident status in countries that tax United Nations income would increase the amount of income tax reimbursements paid by the Organization, which would be charged against the specific non-assessed fund.

111. On the other hand, pursuant to staff rule 4.5 (d), a staff member who holds permanent resident status in a country other than his or her country of nationality may lose his or her entitlement to home leave, education grant, repatriation grant and payment of travel expenses upon separation and removal of household effects where this is contrary to the purpose of those allowances or benefits. This is normally the case where the staff member's duty station is in the country in which he or she holds permanent resident status. This applies whether the staff member encumbers positions financed from assessed or non-assessed funds. Thus, an increase in the number of staff members retaining or acquiring permanent resident status in the country of their duty station could result in less expenditure on certain entitlements.

112. In view of the above-mentioned factors, the cumulative effect of the financial implications of allowing staff members to retain or acquire permanent resident status is uncertain. Currently, staff members who are permanent residents in a country other than their country of nationality are usually reimbursed for payment of national taxes on their United Nations salary and emoluments. At the present stage, it is not possible to project how the number of staff members would change if the restrictions on the acquisition or retention of permanent resident status were to be permanently lifted. At the same time, the Organization would not provide expatriate entitlements to those staff members who are located and work in the duty station at which they have permanent resident status. Similarly, it is not possible to project how the number of staff members in this category would change as a result of allowing the retention and acquisition of permanent resident status.

113. Bearing in mind the Secretary-General's recommendations with regard to this matter and the ramifications arising from the judgements of the United Nations Appeals Tribunal, the General Assembly is invited to reconsider the policy that requires staff members to renounce permanent resident status in a country other than the country of their nationality prior to recruitment. Should the General Assembly decide to no longer retain the policy, such change would entail the appropriate amendment of staff rule 1.5 (c) and administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/19. Should the General Assembly decide to retain the policy, it would be necessary for the Secretary-General to amend staff rule 1.5 (c) in order to address the ramifications of the judgements of United Nations Appeals Tribunal with regard to this matter.

V. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

114. **The General Assembly is requested:**

(a) **To take note of the present report;**

(b) **To approve the following transitional measure, to be implemented from the time of the next review for consideration for conversion to a continuing appointment:**

As a transitional measure to paragraph 53 (d) and the annex to General Assembly resolution 65/247, staff members who have had a performance rating of at least "Meets expectations" or its equivalent in all performance appraisal reports, including those of less than one year, covering the past four years would be eligible for consideration for conversion to a continuing appointment. However, no points would be allocated for any performance appraisal report covering a period of less than one year;

(c) To review the policy that requires staff members to renounce permanent resident status in a country other than the country of their nationality prior to recruitment, in the light of the Secretary-General's recommendations on this matter and recent judgements of the United Nations Appeals Tribunal. The Secretary-General invites the General Assembly to provide guidance to the Secretary-General on whether or not the policy should be maintained.

115. The remaining actions to be taken by the General Assembly are reflected in the relevant sections of the addenda to the present report (A/69/190/Add.1-4).

Annex

Summary of follow-up action taken to implement requests of the General Assembly in its resolutions 63/250, 65/247, 67/255, 68/252 and 68/256 and requests and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions endorsed by the General Assembly

A. General Assembly

Reference in resolution	*Action taken to implement request*
Resolution 63/250, Human resources management	
Section II	**Contractual arrangements and harmonization of conditions of service**
Paragraph 13	The present report contains an update on the implementation of the human resources reforms (see sect. III.A). Financial analysis is pending full implementation given that the continuing appointment review is ongoing.
Resolution 65/247, Human resources management	
Section VI	**Contractual arrangements**
Paragraph 58	Completed. See administrative instruction ST/AI/2013/1 and Corr.1, on the administration of fixed-term appointments.
Resolution 67/255, Human resources management	
Section I	**Human resources management reform**
Paragraph 9	See section III.A of the present report, on the implementation of human resources management reforms.
Paragraph 13	The human resources management scorecard is a tool to measure progress towards staffing imperatives, such as gender and geographical representation. Merit remains the main criteria in selection decisions, in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations.
Paragraph 16	See the report of the Secretary-General on proposed refinements to the performance management system (A/69/190/Add.2).
Paragraph 20	See section III.B.4 of the present report, on learning and career development.
Paragraph 25	See section III.A.2 of the present report, on continuing appointment review.
Section II	**Recruitment and staffing**
Paragraph 34	See section III.B.2 (a) of the present report, on staff selection timelines.
Paragraphs 38, 39, 41 and 42	See the report of the Secretary-General on the young professionals programme (A/69/190/Add.3).

Reference in resolution	*Action taken to implement request*
Paragraph 43	See paragraphs 55 to 60 of the present report, on efforts to achieve gender parity.
Section III	**Comprehensive assessment of the system of geographical representation**
Paragraph 46	See the report of the Secretary-General on the review of the system of desirable ranges (A/69/190/Add.4).
Paragraph 48	Completed. See paragraphs 61 to 65 of the present report, concerning efforts to improve the representation of developing countries.
Section V	**Composition of the Secretariat**
Paragraph 61	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 63	The Under-Secretary-General for Management promulgated administrative instruction ST/AI/2013/4 on consultants and individual contractors, which contains a provision whereby individuals with specific expertise who volunteer their services to the United Nations for no fee and who travel on behalf of the Organization may, subject to clearance by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management on a case-by-case basis, be issued an individual contract with a token fee (e.g. $1). Additional guidelines on the approval process and conditions are currently under preparation.
Paragraph 64	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 65	The request was addressed by the Secretary-General in the context of his report entitled "Overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 and budget for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015" (A/68/731, paras. 166-168).
Paragraph 66	See section III.B.2 (d) of the present report, on outreach.
Section VI	**Consultants**
Paragraph 67	A revised administrative instruction on consultants and individual contractors (ST/AI/2013/4) was issued on 19 December 2013, providing detailed information on the selection process for consultants and specifying that every effort should be made to shortlist for consideration a minimum of three candidates from the widest possible geographical basis. The instruction also sets out the conditions under which consultants can be engaged, including that they may be engaged only when the required services cannot be met from within the current staff resources of the Secretariat owing to a lack of specialized knowledge and/or expertise or capacity. Programme managers are required to certify in a supplementary form that the services of a consultant cannot be met from in-house capacity and to indicate the nationalities and gender of the candidates considered for the consultancy. See also the report of the Secretary-General on gratis personnel, retired staff and consultants and individual contractors (A/69/292/Add.1).

Reference in resolution	*Action taken to implement request*
Paragraph 68	In accordance with the conditions set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/2013/4, the assignments of a consultant must be of a temporary nature and the tasks capable of being performed and completed within a limited and specified period of time. Where an individual contractor is temporarily engaged to perform duties and functions similar to those of a staff member, a clear strategy is to be put in place for a long-term regular staffing solution. See also the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 69	See the report of the Secretary-General on gratis personnel, retired staff and consultants and individual contractors (A/69/292/Add.1).
Section VII	**Staff-management relations**
Paragraph 71	The Secretary-General's bulletin on the Staff-Management Committee has been revised (ST/SGB/2011/6/Rev.1) and a new administrative instruction on staff management relations issued (ST/AI/2014/3).
Section X	**Other matters**
Paragraph 77	See the report of the Secretary-General on the practice in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour, 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 (A/69/283).
Resolution 68/252, Human resources management	
Section I	**Human resources management reform**
Paragraph 5	See the report of the Secretary-General on proposed refinements to the performance management system (A/69/190/Add.2).
Paragraph 6	Completed. An information briefing was held with the Fifth Committee on 6 May 2014.
Section II	**Composition of the Secretariat**
Paragraph 13	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 16	See section III.B.1 of the present report, on workforce planning.
Paragraph 17	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 18	See the report of the Secretary-General on the young professionals programme (A/69/190/Add.3).
Section III	**Practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and possible criminal behaviour**
Paragraphs 21 and 23	See the report of the Secretary-General on the practice in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour, 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 (A/69/283).

Reference in resolution	*Action taken to implement request*
Resolution 68/265, Mobility framework	
	See the report of the Secretary-General containing an update on the preparatory work for implementation of the mobility and career development framework (A/69/190/Add.1).

B. Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Reference in report of Advisory Committee	*Action taken to implement request/recommendation*
Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions emanating from A/67/545	
Staff selection system	
Paragraph 13	See section III.B.1 of the present report, on workforce planning.
Paragraphs 33 and 36	See section III.B.4 of the present report, on learning and career development.
Paragraph 44	See the report of the Secretary-General on the young professionals programme (A/69/190/Add.3).
Paragraph 49	See III.B.2 (d) of the present report, on outreach.
Paragraph 58	See paragraphs 55 to 60 of the present report, on efforts to achieve gender parity.
Paragraphs 138, 145 and 146	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 157	Completed. See the report of the Secretary-General on amendments to the Staff Rules (A/69/117).
Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions emanating from A/68/523	
Paragraphs 5 and 10	See the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics" (A/69/292).
Paragraph 18	See the report of the Secretary-General on the practice in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour, 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 (A/69/283).
Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions emanating from A/68/580	
Paragraphs 5 and 7	A comprehensive proposal to address needs with regard to the placement of United Nations staff members adversely affected by natural disasters, malicious acts and other critical incidents is under development and will be submitted to the General Assembly at a future session.